



Chapter 2

Conditions in Tully-Senter

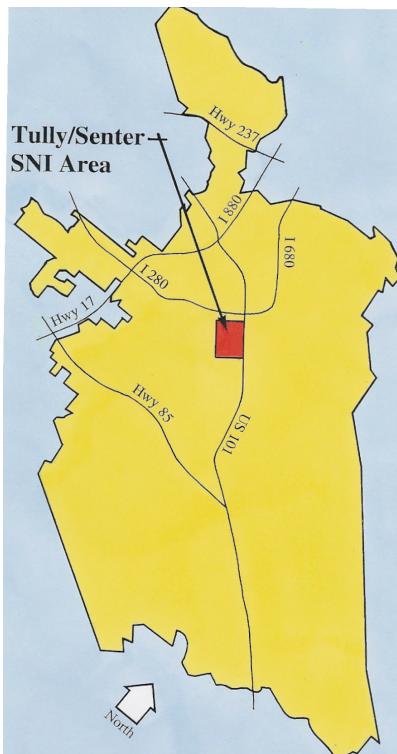
Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the Tully-Senter community planning area in terms of its location within the city, its neighborhood and demographic characteristics, its neighborhood assets, liabilities and challenges. As this chapter will show, Tully-Senter has many assets which it is proud of and wishes to protect yet has a realistic understanding of the challenges it faces in becoming the community it wants to be.

Tully-Senter SNI Area

The Tully-Senter community is somewhat a microcosm of the City of San Jose. Representing a diversity of ethnic groups, residential neighborhoods and land uses, its population has grown rapidly in recent years. Similar to neighborhoods across the City as a whole, Hispanic and Asian populations have increased faster in the past ten years than other segments of the overall population.

Located south of the downtown, Tully-Senter is nearly the center of the city, bounded on the northerly corner by the intersection of Story Road and Highway 101, and by two major city arterials, Tully Road and Senter Road. Not surprisingly, San Jose's world renown as the center of "Silicon Valley" is reflected in local business parks within and just adjacent to the area, which include major technology and manufacturing corporate names.



Vicinity Map

THE TULLY-SENDER COMMUNITY

The Tully-Senter SNI Improvement Area lies within a planning area covering 1,100 acres bounded by Story Road to the north, Tully Road to the south, Senter Road to Highway 101 west to east. Two smaller Neighborhood Revitalization Areas, Rockspring on the west and Santee to the east, planned within the past few years via the Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy, have had a direct relationship to the overall Tully-Senter Strong Neighborhoods Initiative Planning area and are included in its planning process. The SNI area, planning area and neighborhoods are shown in Figure 2 (pg. 2-4).

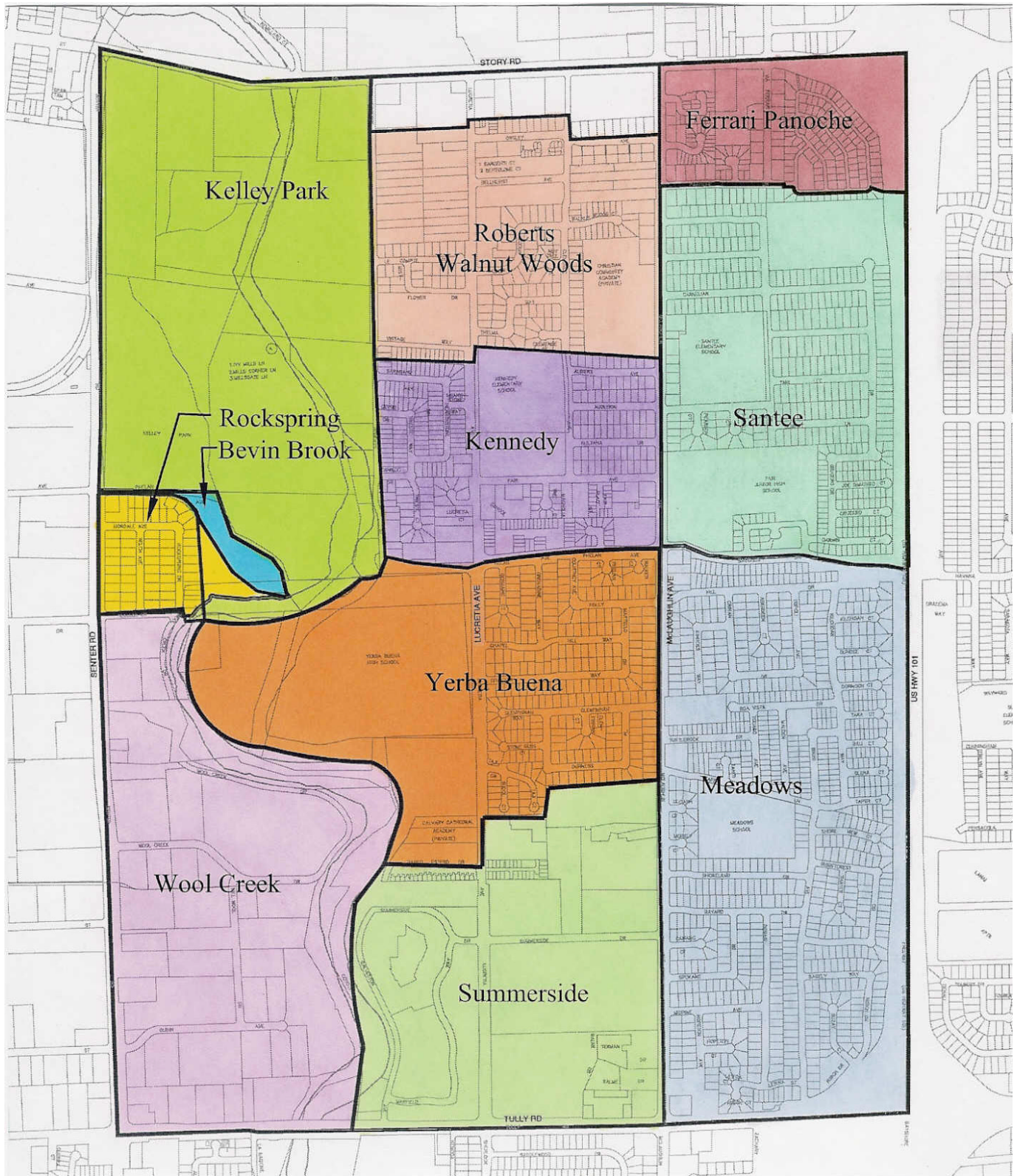
Tully-Senter is home to over 20,000 residents in roughly six identifiable residential neighborhoods. The neighborhood also includes five shopping centers within and nearby its borders as well as business parks and commercial centers in the area. Other major features of this area are Kelley Park and Coyote Creek open space. Together with a complete system of elementary schools, middle school and a high school, this geographical area has nearly all the physical elements of a complete community. If it were elsewhere than in San Jose, it could be a small town unto itself.

Relationship to the Santee and Rockspring NRS Improvement Plans

Neighborhood improvement planning is not new to the Tully-Senter area. Because of acute neighborhood problems, Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy plans were created for the Santee neighborhood (116 acre planning area) in June 1996 and the Rockspring area (22 acres) in November 1999. Both of these

planning areas are engaged in implementation of their original plans, which are similar to this Tully-Senter Neighborhood Improvement Plan in purpose and content but focused on their own, smaller areas. In addition, members of those communities have been involved in the SNI planning process for the overall Tully-Senter area.

The Tully-Senter SNI Improvement Plan forms a complete planning context or sphere of influence for all of the neighborhoods within its boundaries, including the Santee and Rockspring neighborhoods. The Santee and Rockspring neighborhoods will continue to work on the Action Items in their individual Plans, either through the Tully-Senter NAC or through their own neighborhood organizations or other neighborhood groups.



TULLY-SENER SNI AREA NEIGHBORHOODS. Figure 2

Housing Conditions

Tully-Senter's older neighborhoods were originally designed as low-density suburban subdivisions. These neighborhoods are now home to new immigrants living side by side with longtime residents. Now a mixture of single-family detached and attached homes, and multi family buildings, some of the apartment stock has not aged well, showing wear and the need for maintenance. In addition, escalating housing prices have forced many into overcrowded conditions in older homes, often accommodated by the illegal conversion of garages to living units and rental of rooms within single-family homes in excess of what is allowed by the City's code. Code enforcement is in high demand in some areas.

In other areas, the upkeep of single-family homes and multi-family properties is evidence of the pride that many residents have in their property and community. Much of the newer housing has infilled the neighborhoods well, completing neighborhoods and unifying the neighborhood streetscape.

Land Use Development

Overall, the area is approaching full development. The land classified as remaining vacant land¹, 50.13 acres, accounts for less than five percent of the planning area as seen in Table 1 below. Nearly 27 acres of vacant land are designated for residential use with densities ranging from 8 to 25 dwelling units per acre (DU/AC). Buildout could add 441 new dwelling units, 1.64 acres of lands for General Commercial development, and 21.52 acres of Industrial, if all of the identified vacant lands were

¹ See Appendix Table A-1, Tully-Senter Vacant Land Inventory, Department of Planning, Building and Code Enforcement

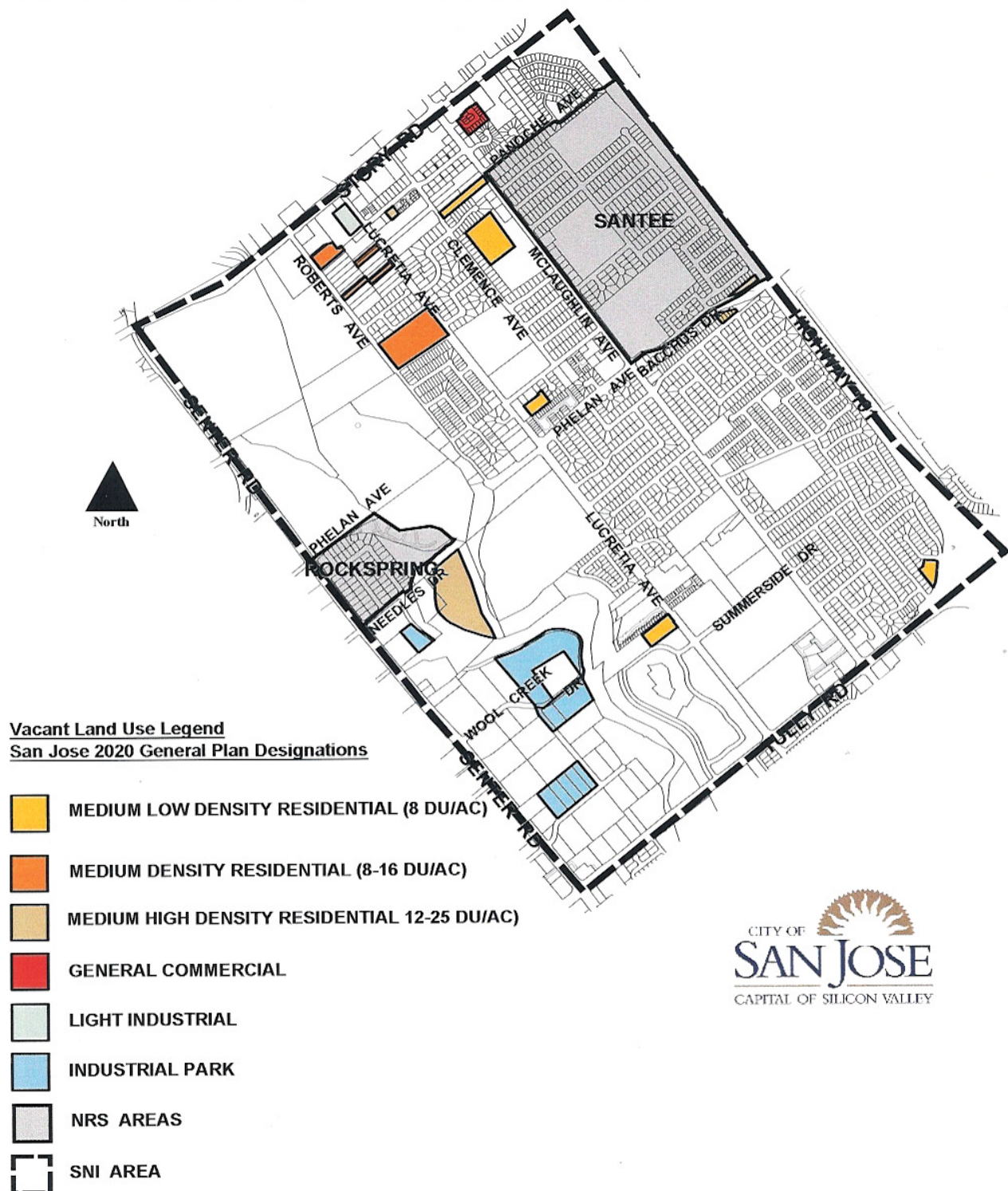
available. Most of the vacant lands as shown on Figure 3 however, are not available for development and those that are generally have projects already approved on them. The vacant land information presented may be useful for reference if circumstances change in the future.

General Plan land use designations for the entire Tully-Senter SNI area are depicted on the General Plan Land Use Diagram Figure 4 (pg. 2-8).

Table 1: Potential Development of Properties Classified As Vacant Land

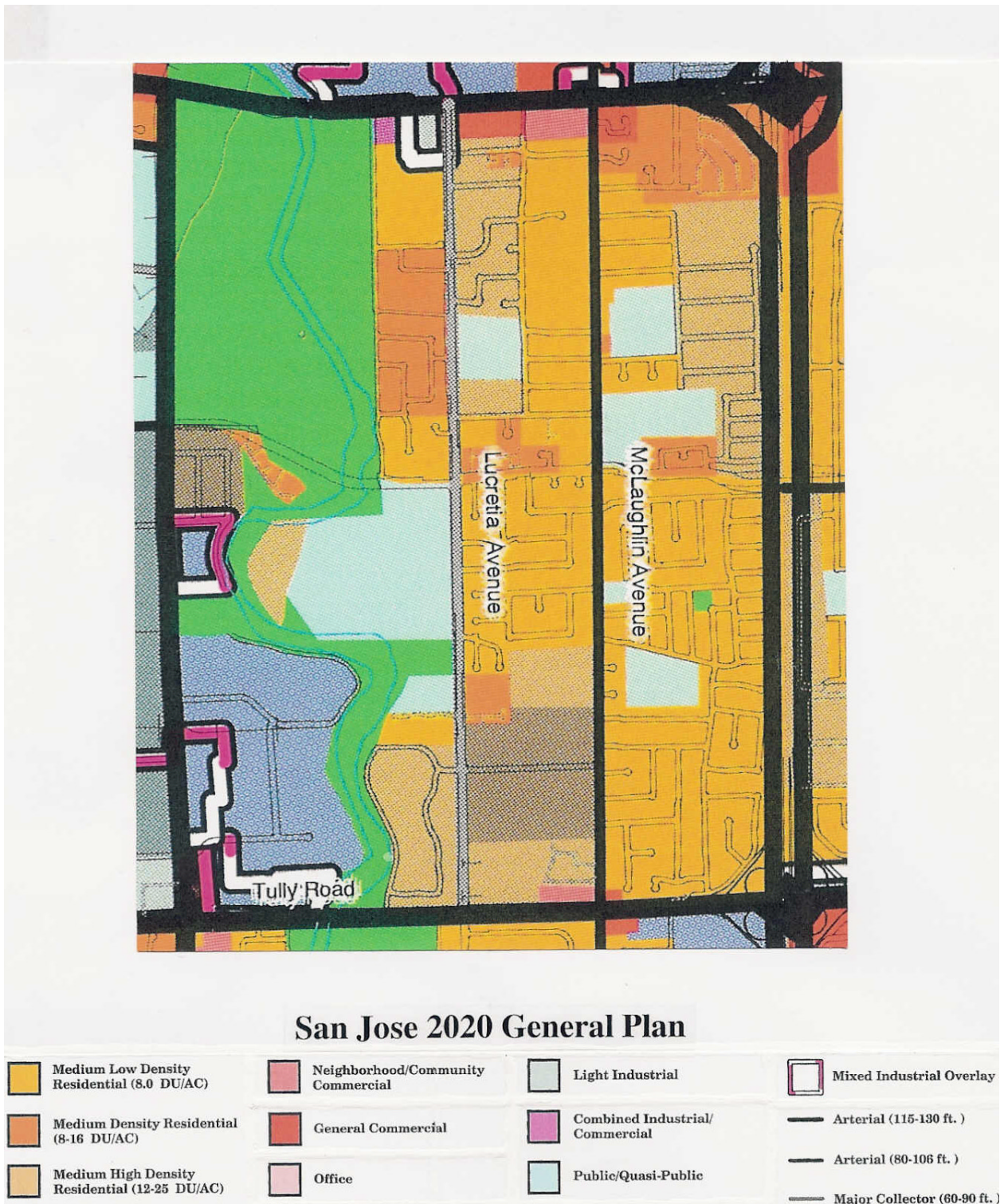
Land Use		Acres	Potential New Development	
			Dwelling Units	Non-Residential
Residential	Medium Low Density (8 DU/AC)	8.84 AC	71	
	Medium Density (8-16 DU/AC)	9.24 AC	148	
	Medium High Density (12-25 DU/AC)	8.89 AC	222	
	Subtotal	26.97 AC	441	
Commercial	General Commercial (GC) ¹	1.64 AC		
		Subtotal	1.64 AC	250,000 SF
Industrial	Light Industrial (LI) ² Industrial Park (IP)	1.41 AC		
		20.11 AC		
		Subtotal	21.52 AC	3,280,000 SF
Total		50.13 AC	441	3,530,000

Source: The Planning Collaborative. ¹ GC calculated at 3.5 FAR; ² LI and IP calculated at 3.5 FAR.



TULLY-SENDER VACANT LAND INVENTORY MAP. Figure 3

Source: Department of Planning, Building & Code Enforcement



GENERAL PLAN LAND USE DIAGRAM. Figure 4

NEIGHBORHOOD DEMOGRAPHICS²

In 2000, the Tully-Senter neighborhood had a population of 18,663, which grew from 16,519 in 1990, a change of 13.0%. By comparison, the City of San Jose's overall population growth was 14.7% during the decade. Tully-Senter is 2.1% of San Jose's total population of 896,850.

Similar to the city as a whole, the ethnic make-up of Tully-Senter has changed since 1990, experiencing a decrease in the percent of White and an increase in the percentage of Asians/Pacific Islanders and Hispanics. In comparison to twenty-one SNI neighborhoods, Tully-Senter (38.6%) is one of six SNI areas³ having a higher percentage of Asians/Pacific Islanders than the city (24.6%) in 2000. As one of these six neighborhoods, Tully-Senter had a lower percentage of Whites (53.5%) than the city overall (70%) and, reflecting most SNI neighborhoods, had a higher percentage of Hispanic origin residents (46.9%) than the city (32.8%) in 2000.

The educational attainment of Tully-Senter residents in 2000 is higher as compared to the city overall, broke down as follows: 59.1% high school graduate or lower (city is 43.2%); 33.3% some college/associate degree (city is 31.5%); 30.3% Bachelor's degree or higher (city is 25.3%).

² All referenced data in this section is based on the City of San Jose Strong Neighborhoods Initiative SNI Benchmark Report completed by Strategic Economics January, 2002.

³ Santee, West Evergreen, Tully-Senter, Tropicana, University, and East Valley-680 Communities.

The median household income in Tully-Senter for the year 2000 was \$63,450, an increase of 18.5% over the 1990 median household income of \$51,696. This compares to the median annual income of all San Jose households in 2000 of \$73,804, a 17.1% increase over 1990.

According to Strategic Economics, “Almost all of the 21 SNI neighborhoods had a substantially higher rate of poverty than the city overall” (SE p.40). An estimated 31.1% of city households had an annual income below \$50,000, which approximates the income defining Low Income (LI) and Very Low Income (VLI) Levels for Santa Clara County households (established by the Department of Housing and Urban Development [HUD]). Tully-Senter’s year 2000 median household income included 41% of all households meeting the threshold of below \$50,000 which is greater than 31.1% of citywide households below \$50,000.

The average size of Tully-Senter households in 2000 was 3.40 persons as compared to 3.10 persons for the city overall. This represents a slight increase over an average of 3.37 in 1990. By comparison, the city lost 5% of its average household size from 3.12 in 1990. Total households increased in Tully-Senter from 4,896 to 5,496 in the year 2000.

Assets, Issues and Challenges



Voting priority actions.

The first Tully-Senter Neighborhood Advisory Committee Meeting and first Community Workshop focused on the public input phase in which residents were asked to identify the neighborhood's assets and concerns expressed as neighborhood "pros and cons". These statements of the community's issues, needs, and neighborhood concerns eventually formed the basis for the identification of Improvement Plan goals, objectives and actions.

NEIGHBORHOOD APPEARANCE AND MAINTENANCE

Assets

The presence of tree-lined streets within the neighborhoods and throughout the community provides a leafy backdrop to the area which residents value highly. The riparian woodland of Coyote Creek contributes to this setting as it winds from south to north, separating a southern portion of the neighborhood before passing through Kelley Park. Along with this major regional park, the overall image of streetscape greenery and neighborhood order is cherished.

Issues

A host of problems were identified by residents, which diminish this setting. These include onset of blight, poor upkeep of residential front yards and commercial frontage parking strips, dumping of discarded furniture, yard waste and garbage in local



*Coyote Creek access from
Phelan Avenue at Roberts Street.*

"In some places, there are not enough street trees, and in others, many have been cut down by local residents."

“Local streets are always getting dumped with garbage, televisions, mattresses and other junk.”

“People from other neighborhoods work on their cars and then leave junked cars and parts in the road.”



Trash along a local road.

streets, the presence of abandoned cars and junked car parts, and the visual clutter of streets choked with parked cars, and in some neighborhoods, an unwelcome abundance of parked trucks.

Challenges

There is a history to Tully-Senter of quiet, well kept neighborhoods graced by suburban landscaped yards and streetscapes. While multi-family housing has intensified some areas, the street trees and landscape frontages of these developments have contributed well to the overall appearance of the community.

The major challenge is to ensure that the community remains and grows as an attractive and well-maintained area. Additionally, the community recognizes it must be vigorous in preventing the forces of visual blight that result from a lack of neighborhood stewardship and poor maintenance practices as well as overcrowding.



"Traffic is getting to be our number one problem."

"McLaughlin can be very crowded with trucks and cars avoiding 101."

"Cars speed through neighborhoods."

"Locals avoid going down Story Road to get to Highway 101."

"Story Road is a mess on weekends."

TRANSPORTATION AND PARKING

Assets

The community values its good access and central location in the city, which provides accessibility to "everything". The hierarchy of city streets, providing local neighborhood streets direct access to major arterials and freeways is a recognized asset. Bus transit is considered accessible, dependable, on time and bus stops convenient, but once on a bus, congested roadways can make travel slow. Bike lanes along major roadways are well marked but often underused. In the future, the Bus Rapid Transit on Monterey Highway and Capitol Expressway Light Rail Project outside but near Tully-Senter may prove to offer benefits to the area especially if shuttle services were provided to some of the apartment areas.

Issues

As elsewhere in the Bay Area, the circulation system suffers from traffic congestion. During peak hours, freeway traffic from Highway 101 and I-280 travels along local arteries as a means of bypassing the congested freeways. Peak hour cut-through traffic, said to occur between 8 to 9 am, and 4:30 to 8:00 pm, seriously congests McLaughlin Avenue (the Artery connecting the Major Arteries, Story Road and Tully Road) and to a lesser extent, Lucretia Avenue and other related roads. The "ring" of Major Arteries (Story Road, Senter Road and Tully Road) is also heavily congested at these varying times and days.

At other times, the community feels that speeding cars and trucks interfere with the ability of children and other pedestrians to comfortably cross streets with or without crosswalks.

The sum of these issues contributes to the overall sentiment that “traffic is getting to be the number one problem”.



Challenges

Similar to other community districts within the City and elsewhere throughout the Bay Area, traffic congestion has become part of a community’s daily life. Somewhat unique to Tully-Senter, the blessings of a central location and excellent access provided by adjacent freeways and major arterials, have also become the source of many of its traffic problems. As a result, the mix of traffic volumes using the road grid of major arterials, arterials, collectors and local streets is complex.

Despite the presence of identifiable patterns of regional “cut-through traffic” using the area to avoid congestion on the freeways and major arteries, the problems and causes of the myriad local traffic concerns are not easily understood. Some solutions require regional remedies and will be better understood once the long-term Highway 101 corridor studies are concluded. Remedies for other traffic issues occurring at the local neighborhood level can be assessed and addressed under the City’s traffic calming planning program.

LAND USE

Assets

The diversity of land use in the planning area is seen as an important asset. With residential neighborhoods ranging from single family to multi-family areas, churches, elementary, junior high and high schools, city park facilities and open space, business parks and commercial centers providing accessibility to five supermarkets and banking affords choices and convenience to local residents.

Issues

Land use conditions of concern to the community include the concentration of Board and Care facilities in the Meadows School neighborhood. In addition, numerous liquor stores and all-night “cafes” with questionable activities are said to attract undesirable activities into the community.

“We’ve got five supermarkets to choose from.”



View of McLaughlin Park.

Some land use issues relate more to the lack of full development. The new George Shirakawa Elementary School is somewhat isolated in the absence of planned adjacent community facilities and could use better pedestrian connections to the neighborhoods north of Coyote Creek. Across the creek is the vacant Carroll Ranch property adjacent to Yerba Buena High School, a potential community park facility resource. A land swap is now under consideration between the City and the Carroll family. Should the swap take place then this property will be developed as a City park as part of the Coyote Creek park chain.



Streetside litter degrades the neighborhood.

The crowded use of vacant lots (as well as neighborhood streets) for overnight truck parking points to a larger regional land use need for overnight truck facilities serving regional and interstate carriers. The use of the neighborhoods along 101 for these purposes is highly incompatible with local neighborhood character.

Approximately 50 acres of land is classified as vacant. This is generally concentrated in the southwest industrial corner of the planning area and in the northerly section near Story Road (between Roberts Road and McLaughlin Avenue). Other properties, approximately 30 to 50 acres, are considered underdeveloped and have potential for redevelopment.

Challenges

The land use challenges of Tully-Senter are two-fold: (1) improve compatible existing land uses and minimize undesirable land uses; (2) utilize opportunities offered by vacant and underutilized land for needed community facilities or other development beneficial to the community.

The first challenge will require dealing with nuisance land use and property conditions. For the second, planning and action program efforts should address these opportunities before they are developed in ways that may not contribute to community needs.



*Visit to Meadows School during
NAC field trip.*

*“Kelley Park is probably the finest in the
valley.”*

*“There is a lot of hazardous
skateboarding in areas inappropriate for
young kids.”*

*“Not enough places for teens to hang
out.”*

RECREATION

Assets

At first glance, Tully-Senter appears to have ample park, recreation and open space. Kelley Park offers 160 acres of park and recreation lands. The new Vietnamese Heritage Garden is nearly ready for construction on the Roberts Street side of the park. A Coyote Creek Trail is planned to connect Kelley Park to Stonegate Park south of the project area (and in the vicinity of Stonegate Elementary School) with additional plans to connect neighborhoods and parks to the north of Story Road. A new eighteen-hole golf course has recently opened just south of the planning area while the new South Central Swimming Pool is to be built in the Bacchus Drive area. McLaughlin Park, constructed in 1998, provides 1.1 acres of neighborhood park use.

Issues

With Kelley Park in the northwest corner of the area and the continuous woodland open space of Coyote Creek winding southward, the dearth of neighborhood, “close to home” recreation for families and kids is unexpected. A casual drive through the Meadows School, Kennedy Elementary School neighborhoods and the Santee Elementary School neighborhood passing neighborhood sidewalks and streets teeming with children at play reflects the shortage of park and recreation space in these neighborhoods.

Table 2 compares the existing recreation land supply to the needed recreation land based on the population level of service established in the City of San Jose General Plan of 3.5 acres of local serving parkland per 1,000 population. Based on an estimated population of 18,663, the three subareas of the SNI Area have a total level of service (LOS) need for 65.3 acres of local serving recreation land. Total existing recreation land provided by local schools and local serving park space is 23.3 acres; total acreage required to meet this need is 42.

Table 2: Existing Neighborhood & Community Serving Recreation Lands

Park & Recreation Facilities	Subareas			Totals	Needs Analysis	
	A Meadow School	B Summerside	C Kennedy		L.O.S. ³	Cumulative Balance
Existing:						
School Playgrounds¹						
Elementary School	0.8ac	1.5ac	1.1ac	3.4ac		
Middle School	0.0ac	0.0ac	6.8ac	6.8ac		
High School	10.0ac	0.0ac	0.0ac	10.0ac		
Subtotal	10.8ac	1.5ac	7.9ac	20.2ac	37.3	-17.1
Local Serving Recreation Land²						
Neighborhood Parks	0.0ac	0.0ac	0.0ac	0.0ac		
Mini-Parks	0.9ac	0.0ac	1.0ac	1.9ac		
Tot Lots	0.0ac	0.2ac	0.0ac	0.2ac		
Community Center	1.0ac	0.0ac	0.0ac	1.0ac		
Subtotal	1.9ac	0.2ac	1.0ac	3.1ac	28.0	-24.9
Total Existing	12.7ac	1.7ac	8.9ac	23.3ac	65.3	-42.0

¹ Up to 2 acres / 1000 population of school playground level of service

² Minimum 1.5 acres / 1000 population level of service

³ L.O.S. for SNI area based on total estimated population of 18,663 @ 3.5 ac. / 1,000 population
(Source: Bay Area Economics)

"We need parks which are closer to home."



Meadows School

Improvements to sports fields and the recently constructed skateboard park on the Santee Elementary School grounds leads the way in efforts to make fuller use of school grounds for neighborhood recreation. At present, the facilities at Meadows School and Kennedy Elementary School are insufficient and do little to overcome the great deficiencies in neighborhood-serving park and recreation facilities.

Challenges

Despite the parks and open space assets of the planning area, the need for close-to-home neighborhood park facilities far exceeds available resources. The shortage of vacant land, especially in the areas around the neighborhoods that need parks most severely, limits available solutions.

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL

Assets

Tully-Senter's richness as a community derives from its culturally and ethnically diverse population. The area's good school system, availability of community services, community centers, responsive police, and presence of such special community services as church sponsored social programs, and Fair Exchange located in the Fair Middle School foster community communication and interaction.



"Living with a diversity of groups helps you to understand other people."

The location of schools within the community, with elementary schools distributed within convenient walking distance to neighborhoods ($\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ mile walking distance) and the junior high school and high school also well-located (providing a one mile walking distance), positions the schools to serve as a vital community asset.

Issues

The process of neighborhood change, which seems to have increased in recent years, also increases the pressure on existing resources to support the community. Cultural and language barriers for new immigrants who sometimes fear the involvement of City service staff and police in their lives, limit the effectiveness of community programs. Some feel the area does not have a good community voice like other neighborhoods, and needs something like a community newsletter.



Challenges

“We need to have a more cohesive sense of community.”

The result of these pressures is an overall desire to create and live in a more cohesive community. The challenge, a constant in the face of these changes, is to do more and to do better, more effectively. The school system is well situated to serve the neighborhoods and provides significant opportunities to act as “Hubs”, providing services and welcoming meeting spaces to the community.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES



George Shirakawa Community Center

Assets

The incidence and rate of crime is sometimes a symptom of social conditions and the quality of social services. Most residents feel they are safe in Tully-Senter. Although people say it wasn't always like this, the overall sense of safety seems to be shared by the residents of various neighborhoods within the community. Many see the current situation as a direct result of the vigorous and expanded police presence, which significantly reduced the high level of gang activity that occurred as recently as a few years ago. This presence continues and coupled with other assets of the community, including the control of gangs within the local schools, seems to have greatly improved community comfort.

"I have no sense of being fearful."

"I feel safe at all times of the day."

The community also feels it enjoys excellent schools and is especially proud of the well used George Shirakawa Community Center on Lucretia Avenue.

Issues

Social conditions are obviously present such as homelessness and vagrancy associated with the encampments under Highway 101 overpasses and the streets where unemployed day workers hang around trying to find work for the day. Incidents of cars being stolen or vandalized and home burglaries remind the community that crime does exist.



Children at Meadows School.

“Teach people how to improve themselves, from childhood to adults, and make citizens not criminals to prevent crime.”

“Schools and curriculums need to include everyone.”

While endowed with good schools and a fine community center, there is a strong sense of greater community need for facilities and services than is presently available. This appears to be true for the continuing needs of families, children, teens, seniors, recent immigrants and others.

Challenges

One of the most important messages coming from the community is that the need for young teens to join gangs does not readily go away. The formation of new gangs in neighborhoods and in schools is ongoing. Gangs and related crime levels are cyclical. School facilities, which serve as broad community resources have the potential to break down the neighborhood separations defined by gang “turf” which divide friends and neighbors. The challenge of maintaining a sense of community safety is one that is being met and can be strengthened in the future with a unified police and community approach.

With a population that continues to grow, including through the arrival of many new immigrants, language barriers can pose a major challenge. Community communication resources will need to be expanded in efforts to achieve “a sense of community”.